

## **Board of Health Report – February 2022**

Substance Abuse and Prevention Division, Lowell Health Department

Substance Abuse Coordinator, Division Manager

*Lainnie Emond, LMHC*

### ***Lowell Mayor's Opioid Task Force***

Lainnie continues to work with the Co-Chairs of the Mayor's Opioid Task Force to create monthly agendas and invite new partners. Next meetings are scheduled for February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022 from 5:30-6:30pm. All are welcome to join virtually:

<https://lowellma.zoom.us/j/88561406588?pwd=TWNNM2U1VGp6ejBzSWJPK3ZocExyQT09>

Lainnie continues to lead the **Data Subcommittee** of the Mayor's Opioid Task Force. The Subcommittee is current analyzing local data sets specific to opioid overdose and program engagement with the intention of highlighting disparities between racial and ethnic populations. Data sets show an increase in engagement in treatment and harm reduction services, as well as an increase in Opioid Related Incidents (Trinity EMS), with the Hispanic/Latinx population. Data Subcommittee is drafting a one page summary that highlights relevant data.

### ***Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP) Grant***

Lainnie's position is currently funded 50% by the Lowell Police Department's (LPD) COSSAP grant (and 50% funded by the City). The COSSAP grant was awarded to the LPD in 2019, and funds several positions on the Lowell CO-OP, including the Lowell Health Department's Youth Outreach Specialist and Clinical Recovery Specialist positions in full. Specific to the COSSAP grant, Lainnie is charged with creating a manual that describes how the Lowell CO-OP was created to serve as a model for other communities to replicate.

### **[www.DrugFreeGreaterLowell.org](http://www.DrugFreeGreaterLowell.org)**

The Lowell HEALing Communities Study (HCS) offered Lainnie the opportunity to transfer content from their website to the Drug Free Greater Lowell website, as when the Lowell HCS ends in June 2022, the Lowell HCS website will no longer exist. Lainnie agreed as the HCS website content hosts the most up-to-date content on opioid use disorder, naloxone, and local treatment resources. Lainnie has been working with Devon Goldberg, Lowell HCS team member at the Greater Lowell Health Alliance, to update existing Drug Free Greater Lowell content. In addition to updating content, several new pages have been created, including [Types of Substance Use Disorder](#) and [Stigma](#).

### ***Additional Substance Abuse Coordinator Activities***

- Since November 2021, Lainnie has run the monthly Lowell Homeless Provider Meetings while the City hires a new Director of Homeless Initiatives. Meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month from 10-11am. Eighteen agencies were represented at January's meeting.
- Lainnie continues to attend monthly HEALing Community Study coalition and Communications Subcommittee coalition meetings.
- Lainnie attended the January Mill City Prevention Networks Data and Media Subcommittee meetings.

Massachusetts Collaborative for Action, Leadership, and Learning 3 (MassCALL3)  
*Devin Gilmore, Substance Use Prevention Grant Coordinator*

***Mill City Prevention Network***

The Mill City Prevention Network (MCPN) is a community group incorporating lived experiences and historically underrepresented perspectives into the planning and implementation of substance use prevention practices, policies, and programs in Lowell. Devin hosted the first Data and Media Subcommittees of MCPN on January 4th and 6th, respectively. Key stakeholders in local prevention and youth services attended these meetings to provide input on the group's data collection process as well as our ongoing branding and information dissemination efforts. In February, MCPN's primary goals are creating and distributing a community survey and building public interest in our grant process by disseminating information about the new coalition throughout Lowell.

***Community Assessment***

On January 13th, Devin facilitated a two-hour focus group with approximately fifteen teachers at Greater Lowell Technical High School, collecting data on student substance use and mental health. Devin will continue collecting data on youth substance use and prevention capacity in Lowell by conducting a community survey, as well as more focus groups and key stakeholder interviews throughout February.

***Prevention Programming***

Devin and her MassCALL3 counterpart in Tewksbury, Maria Ruggiero, are developing interactive substance use prevention presentations to be launched in late February at the Butler School. These presentations aim to combine social emotional learning with drug and alcohol education to promote prosocial attitudes and behaviors while increasing the perception of harm youth have of varying substances. Devin and Maria will present to 160 students in grades 5 through 8 at the Butler School. These presentations will continue to be offered free of charge for teachers to incorporate into their health education curricula.

### State Opioid Response – Prevention in Early Childhood 3 (SOR-PEC)

*\*\* Lainnie Emond is overseeing grant efforts until a SOR-PEC Grant Coordinator is hired\*\**

#### ***Grant Summary***

The Lowell Health Department has been awarded the SOR-PEC grant from MDPH/BSAS. SOR-PEC aims to:

1. Strengthen prevention capacity and infrastructure within funded communities to support a proposed age range of children (prenatal – 11 years of age) and family units with parents/caregivers with a history of substance misuse and addiction (including those currently in treatment or recovery); and
2. Enhance protective factors and minimize risk factors in the lives of a proposed age range of children (prenatal – 11 years of age) with elevated levels of risk for future substance use and related health and behavioral health issues.

#### ***Grant Timeline***

SOR-PEC was awarded to the Lowell Health Department with a start date of July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The grant is scheduled to run until September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022. MDPH/BSAS reported that they anticipated that the possibility for extension funding will be announced next spring.

#### ***Coalition and Upcoming Meetings***

The Lowell Early Childhood Advisory Council has agreed to be the decision making body for Lowell SOR-PEC. The Lowell Early Childhood Advisory Council is comprised of local experts working with youth 8 years of age and younger in various capacities.

Syringe Collection Program  
*Andres Gonzalez, Syringe Collection Program Coordinator*

\*Winter Bathroom Announcement campaign is in effect. Over 50 Local businesses have been targeted.\*

**City Department and Community Partner Engagement:**

- MVRTA
- Heritage State Park
- Lowell Housing Authority
- Lowell Public Schools
- Lowell City Council
- Lowell Public Works
- Salvation Army
- Life Connection Center
- Healthy Streets
- UMass Lowell
- Trinity E.M.S.
- Middlesex County Superior Court
- Mass DOT
- Office of the City Manager
- Lowell CO-OP
- Department of Planning & Development
- Lowell Street Department
- Lowell Police Department
- Lowell Parks Department

**Meetings Attended:**

- 01/04/2022 and 01/18/2022 Coordinating Outreach and Engagement Teams (COET)
- 01/21/2022 DA Marian Ryan's Opioid Task Force

**Areas Proactively Swept for Discarded Syringes:**

- Veteran's Way
- Gorham Street
- Sheehy Park
- Dutton Street Bridge
- Riverfront Park
- Le Lachur Park
- Lowell Locks
- Hunts Falls Bridge
- George Street
- Favor Street
- Rogers Street Bridge
- Rogers Street Bridge
- South Common Park
- North Common Park
- Thorndike Overpass
- Eastern Canal Park
- Concord River
- Point Park
- Bridge Street Park
- River Bike Path
- Lincoln Street

**Syringe Collection Activity 2021**

Total Number of...	Jan (1-24)	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Discarded pick-up requests	4												4
Incoming pick-up request calls	12												12
Syringes picked-up while responding to <b><u>all</u></b> discarded pick-up requests	47												47
Syringes picked up during Community Clean-up Events	0												0
Syringes proactively picked-up while in the community	377												377
Hours proactively picking-up discarded syringes	33												33
Pounds of sharps disposed via Sharps Disposal Kiosk	18												435

Lowell Community Opioid Outreach Program (CO-OP) – **Overview**  
*Maricia Verma, Lowell CO-OP Supervisor*

**Lowell CO-OP Data: 2020 and 2021 Comparison**

--	November 2020	November 2021	2020 Total	2021 Total
<b>Total Encounters</b>	228	191	1,387	<b>2,347</b>
<b>Unique Encounters</b>	90	111	640	<b>1187</b>
<b>Initial Interaction</b>	19	35	151	<b>346</b>
<b>OD Follow-Up</b>	9	6	104	<b>134</b>
<b>Section 35</b>	1	3	10	<b>35</b>
<b>Clinical Clients</b>	43	77	174	<b>771</b>
<b>Disseminate Narcan</b>	60	84	198	<b>780</b>
<b>SUD Treatment</b>	18	26	188	<b>294</b>
<b>Medical Treatment</b>	0	9	106	<b>100</b>
<b>Other Services</b>	2	34	99	<b>131</b>
<b>Misc. Outreach</b>	91	114	684	<b>1,499</b>

**Additional**

Maricia, Lainnie Emond, Maryann Manzi (Lowell Police Department Public Safety Research and Planning Director), Katie Keefe (Lowell Police Department Program Director), and the research team at UMass Lowell finished their work on the final report for the Smart Police Initiative grant, which helped to fund the Lowell CO-OP from October 2016 through September 2021.

Lowell Community Opioid Outreach Program (CO-OP) – **Clinical Services**  
*Joseph Aniello, Clinical Recovery Specialist*

\*Please note that Clinical Staff on the Lowell CO-OP are Joseph Aniello, Maricia Verma (CO-OP Supervisor), and Gianna Sandelli (Assistance Director of Outreach from Lowell House Addiction Treatment and Recovery).\*

**Lowell CO-OP Clinical Data: 2020 and 2021 Comparison**

--	November 2020	November 2021	Total 2020	Total 2021
<b>Clinical Sessions</b>	148	137	756	<b>1671</b>
<b>Clinical Clients</b>	43	77	208	<b>667</b>
<b>Initial Interaction</b>	5	13	54	<b>266</b>
<b>Medical Treatment</b>	20	15	141	<b>280</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	2	11	39	<b>150</b>
<b>Housing</b>	39	57	125	<b>720</b>
<b>Financial</b>	66	83	26	<b>809</b>
<b>DCF</b>	3	3	63	<b>43</b>
<b>Other</b>	9	34	96	<b>408</b>

**Brief Client Case Example**

*This section will be used to share success stories of clients working with Lowell CO-OP's clinical staff. Success stories help to frame the work of the Lowell CO-OP, and adds context to the various needs and levels of support that Lowell CO-OP clients face as they work towards recovery.*

In January of 2021, the Lowell CO-OP clinical team encountered a homeless individual with children. Joseph connected client to Community Teamwork Inc. (CTI) for emergency housing. The individual and his family were running out emergency housing time, Joseph assisted the client in negotiating a week extension with CTI. Joseph in collaboration with CTI assistance was able to secure permanent housing in a suitable apartment for client and the children.

**Additional**

A housing case worker from Community Teamwork Inc. continues to come to the Lowell Community Counseling Center, where the Lowell CO-OP office is located, on Mondays from 10am-2pm. The Lowell CO-OP's clinical team has been able to navigate clients to the housing case worker for assistance with expedited housing applications and emergency resources and funding. This is a valuable asset for Lowell CO-OP clients.

## Lowell Community Opioid Outreach Program (CO-OP) – Youth Services

*\*\*Completed by Maricia Verma in the interim\*\**

### **Youth Outreach Specialist (YOS) Update**

Second round interviews for the YOS position were held in late December 2021 with Maricia, Lainnie Emond, and Lowell CO-OP team members. A candidate was selected and offer letter was sent out; further hiring updates will be provided in the next Board of Health report.

Gianna Sandelli (Clinical Outreach Specialist from Lowell House Addiction Treatment and Recovery) and Joseph Aniello (Clinical Recovery Specialist from the Lowell Health Department) continue to share the youth case load while the YOS position is vacant.

### **Youth Services Data**

--	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Youth Services Sessions	--	17	51	70	59	49	37	64	38	11	32	19	447
Youth Services Clients	--	6	16	15	16	15	12	23	12	7	16	9	474
SUD Treatment and Recovery Coordination	--	--	15	24	21	10	3	7	6	14	23	8	131
Healthcare Coordination	--	14	14	14	15	15	7	11	5	1	7	2	105
Housing Coordination	--	4	7	16	12	8	9	9	6	9	15	8	103
Youth Connected to Services within 48 Hours*	--	7	14	8	14	17	10	16	17	--	--	--	103
Care Coordination Meetings with Family/Collaterals*	--	9	25	18	45	29	19	26	23	--	--	--	194

*\*After considerations to current and anticipated staff changes, changes to data collection and analysis are underway. Data points for “Youth Connected to Services within 48 Hours” and “Care Coordination Meetings with Family/Collaterals” are not accounted for October and November.*